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**Chapter 13.34 - LANDSCAPING STANDARDS**

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**13.34.010 - Purpose.**

This chapter establishes requirements for landscaping to enhance the appearance of developments, provide shade, reduce heat and glare, control soil erosion, conserve water, screen potentially incompatible land uses, preserve the integrity of neighborhoods, improve air quality, and improve pedestrian and vehicular traffic and safety. (Ord. 205 § 1 (Exh. A), 2003)

**13.34.020 - Applicability.**

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The provisions of this chapter apply to all land uses as follows:

- A. **New Projects.** Each new nonresidential and multifamily residential project shall provide landscaping in compliance with this chapter. Each single-family subdivision of five or more parcels shall provide street trees in compliance with Section 13.34.050(B)(2)(d)(iii).
- B. **Existing Development.** The approval of a minor use permit, use permit, minor variance, variance, master development plan, or application for design review for physical alterations and/or a change in use within an existing development may include one or more conditions of approval requiring compliance with specific landscaping and irrigation requirements of this chapter.
- C. **Timing of Installation.** Required landscape and irrigation improvements shall be installed prior to final building inspection. The installation of landscaping for a residential project may be deferred for a maximum of ninety days in compliance with Section 13.64.050.
- D. **Alternatives to Requirements.** The review authority may modify the standards of this chapter to accommodate alternatives to required landscape materials or methods, where the review authority first determines that the proposed alternative will be equally effective in achieving the purposes of this chapter. (Ord. 205 § 1 (Exh. A), 2003)

**13.34.030 - Landscape and irrigation plans.**

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- A. **Preliminary Landscape Plan.** A preliminary landscape plan shall be submitted as part of each application for new development, or the significant expansion (i.e., twenty-five percent or more of floor area), or redevelopment of an existing use, as determined by the director.
- B. **Final Landscape Plan.** After land use approval, a final landscape plan shall be submitted as part of the application for a building permit. A final landscape plan shall be approved by the director prior to the start of grading or other construction, and prior to the issuance of a building permit.
- C. **Content and Preparation.** Preliminary landscape plans and final landscape plans shall contain the information required for landscape plans by the department. All landscape plans submitted in compliance with this chapter shall be prepared by a California licensed landscape architect, licensed landscape contractor, certified nurseryman, or other professional determined by the director to be qualified, based on the requirements of state law.
- D. **Review and Approval.** After initial application, the director shall review each preliminary landscape plan and final landscape plan to verify its compliance with the provisions of this chapter. The director may approve the submittal in compliance with this chapter, or may disapprove or require changes to a submittal if it is not in compliance.
- E. **Statement of Surety.** When required by the director, security in the form of cash, performance bond, letter of credit, or certificate of deposit, in an amount equal to one hundred fifty percent of the total value of all plant materials, irrigation, installation, and maintenance shall be posted with the town for a two-year period. The director may require statements of surety for phased development projects, a legitimate delay in

landscape installation due to seasonal requirements (including adverse weather conditions) and similar circumstances where it may not be advisable or desirable to install all approved landscaping before occupancy of the site.

F. **Minor Changes to Approved Plans.** Landscape plan approval may include the director authorizing minor changes from the requirements of this chapter. (Ord. 205 § 1 (Exh. A), 2003)

#### **13.34.040 - Landscape location requirements.**

Landscaping shall be provided in all areas of a site subject to development with structures, grading, or the removal of natural vegetation, as follows.

A. **Setbacks.** The setback and open space areas required by this title, and easements for utilities and drainage courses shall be landscaped, except where:

1. Occupied by approved structures or paving;
2. A required setback is screened from public view;
3. They are retained in their natural state, and/or the director determines that landscaping is not necessary to achieve the purposes of this chapter; or
4. In the case of an easement, the public works director determines that landscaping would interfere with the purposes and proper functioning of the easement. This determination may include the public works director requiring alternative appropriate landscaping in consultation with the planning and building director.

B. **Unused Areas.** Any area of a project site not intended for a specific use, including a pad site in a shopping center intended for future development, shall be landscaped unless retained in its natural state, and the director determines that landscaping is not necessary to achieve the purposes of this chapter.

C. **Parking Areas.** Parking areas shall be landscaped in compliance with the following requirements.

1. **Landscape Materials.** Landscaping materials shall be provided throughout the parking lot area using a combination of trees, shrubs, and ground cover.
2. **Curbing.** Areas containing plant materials shall be bordered by a concrete curb at least six inches high and six inches wide. The director may approve alternative barrier design to protect landscaped areas from damage by vehicles.
3. **Location of Landscaping.** Parking lot landscaping shall be located so that pedestrians are not required to cross landscaped areas to reach building entrances from parked cars. This should be achieved through proper orientation of the landscaped fingers and islands.
4. **Perimeter Parking Lot Landscaping.**
  - a. **Adjacent to Streets.** A parking area for a nonresidential use adjoining a street shall be designed to provide a landscaped planting strip between the street right-of-way and parking area equal in depth to the setback required by the zoning district or fifteen feet, whichever is more. A parking area for a residential use shall comply with the setback requirements of the applicable zoning district.
    - i. The landscaping shall be designed and maintained to screen cars from view from the street to a height of minimum height of thirty-six inches, but shall not exceed any applicable height limit for landscaping within a setback.
    - ii. Screening materials may include a combination of plant materials, earth berms, raised planters, or other screening devices which meet the intent of this requirement. A solid masonry wall with a maximum height of thirty-six inches may be used only where the director determines that no feasible alternative exists.

- iii. Shade trees shall be provided at a minimum rate of one for every thirty linear feet of landscaped area.
  - iv. Plant materials, signs, or structures within a traffic safety sight area of a driveway shall comply with Section 13.30.050(E).
  - b. **Adjacent to Side or Rear Property Lines.** Parking areas for nonresidential uses shall provide a perimeter landscape strip at least six feet wide (inside dimension) where the parking area adjoins a side or rear property line. The requirement for a landscape strip may be satisfied by a yard or buffer area that is otherwise required. Trees shall be provided at the rate of one for each thirty linear feet of landscaped area.
  - c. **Adjacent to Structures.** When a parking area is located adjacent to a nonresidential structure, a minimum five-foot wide landscape strip shall be provided adjacent to the structure, exclusive of any building entries, or areas immediately adjacent to the wall of the structure that serve as pedestrian accessways.
  - d. **Adjacent to Residential.** A parking area for a nonresidential use adjoining a residential use or zone shall provide a landscaped buffer yard with a minimum ten-foot width between the parking area and the common property line bordering the residential use. A solid masonry wall, solid fence, and a landscape buffer shall be provided along the property line to address land use compatibility issues such as nuisance noise and light/glare. Trees shall be provided at the rate of one for each thirty linear feet of landscaped area.
5. **Interior Parking Lot Landscaping.**
- a. **Amount of Landscaping.**
    - i. Multifamily, commercial and office uses shall provide landscaping within the parking area at a minimum ratio of ten percent of the gross area of the parking lot. One shade tree shall be provided for every five parking spaces.
    - ii. Industrial/manufacturing uses shall provide landscaping within the parking area at a minimum ratio of six percent of the gross area of the parking lot. One tree shall be provided for every ten parking spaces.
  - b. **Location of Landscaping.** Landscaping shall be evenly dispersed throughout the parking area to shade as much of the parking area as feasible. Use of an orchard-style planting scheme (placement of trees in uniformly spaced rows) is encouraged for larger parking areas. Parking lots with more than one hundred spaces should provide a concentration of landscape elements at primary entrances, including specimen trees, flowering plants, enhanced paving, and project identification. (Ord. 216 § 11, 2005; Ord. 205 § 1 (Exh. A), 2003)

#### **13.34.050 - Landscape standards.**

A. **Landscape Design.** The required landscape plan shall be designed to integrate all elements of the project (e.g., buildings, parking lots, and streets) to achieve their aesthetic objectives, desirable microclimates, and minimize water and energy demand.

- 1. **Plant Selection and Grouping.** Plant materials shall be selected for: water demand and drought tolerance; adaptability and relationship to the Loomis environment, and the geological and topographical conditions of the site; color, form, and pattern; ability to provide shade; and soil retention capability.
  - a. Plants having similar water use shall be grouped together in distinct hydrozones.
  - b. The protection and preservation of native species and natural areas is encouraged, and may be required by conditions of approval as a result of project review in compliance with the

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

- c. Fire prevention shall be addressed on sites in the heavily wooded and/or vegetated areas of the town identified by the fire district as being fire-prone by providing fire-resistant landscaping buffers between development areas and naturally vegetated areas, as identified by the director.
2. **Minimum Dimensions.** Each area of landscaping shall have a minimum interior width of eight feet within the residential, commercial, and BP zoning districts, and five feet in the ILT and IL zoning districts. Wherever this title requires a landscaped area of a specified width, the width shall be measured exclusive of any curb or wall.
3. **Height Limits.** Landscape materials shall be selected, placed on a site, and maintained to not:
  - a. Exceed a maximum height of thirty-six inches within a required front or street side setback, except for one or more trees with the lowest portion of their canopy maintained at a minimum height of six feet above grade; or
  - b. Interfere with the proper operation of solar energy equipment or passive solar design on adjacent parcels.
4. **Protective Curbing.** Required landscaping shall be protected with a minimum six-inch high concrete curb, except adjacent to bicycle paths, or where otherwise deemed unnecessary by the director.
5. **Safety Requirements.** Landscape materials shall be located so that at maturity they do not:
  - a. Interfere with safe sight distances for vehicular, bicycle, or pedestrian traffic;
  - b. Conflict with overhead utility lines, overhead lights, or walkway lights; or
  - c. Block pedestrian or bicycle ways.
6. **Water Features.** Decorative water features (e.g., fountains, ponds, waterfalls) shall have recirculating water systems.
- B. **Plant Material.** Required landscape shall include trees, shrubs, and ground covers, as follows:
  1. **Size at Time of Planting.** Plant materials shall be sized and spaced to achieve immediate effect and shall not be less than a fifteen-gallon container for trees, five-gallon container for specimen shrubs and six-inch pots for mass planting, unless otherwise approved by the review authority on the basis that the alternate size will achieve the desired immediate effect equally well.
  2. **Trees.** Tree planting shall comply with the following standards. Existing trees shall be retained and preserved in compliance with Chapter 13.52.
    - a. Trees shall not be planted under any structure that may interfere with normal growth (for example, an eave, overhang, balcony, light standard or other similar structure).
    - b. Trees in landscape planters less than ten feet in width or located closer than five feet from a permanent structure shall be provided with root barriers/root barrier panels.
    - c. Trees shall be staked in compliance with standards provided by the department.
    - d. **Number of Trees.**
      - i. Parking area: refer to Section 13.34.040(C).
      - ii. Street setbacks: one per two hundred square feet of landscaped area.
      - iii. Street trees: one per thirty-foot length of right-of-way. The director may modify this requirement depending on the chosen tree species and its typical spread at maturity.
  3. **Groundcover and Shrubs.** The majority of areas required to be landscaped shall be covered with groundcover, shrubs, turf, or other types of plants that are predominantly drought tolerant.

- a. A minimum of two, five-gallon size shrubs shall be provided for every six feet of distance along street setbacks, or as approved by the director.
  - b. Groundcover shall be provided throughout the landscaped area and shall be spaced to achieve full coverage within one year.
  - c. Artificial groundcover or shrubs shall not be allowed.
  - d. Crushed rock, redwood chips, pebbles, stone, and similar materials shall be allowed up to fifteen percent of the total required landscape area. Artificial or synthetic ground covers are not allowed.
  - e. Nonturf areas (e.g., shrub beds) shall be top dressed with a bark chip mulch or approved alternative.
4. **Turf.** Turf shall be limited to fifty percent of the total landscaped area on the site where the applicant provides calculations approved by the director that demonstrate that the irrigation requirements will not exceed standard low water usage. No turf shall be allowed:
- a. In any area of ten feet or less in width; or
  - b. On any slope exceeding ten percent (twenty-five percent, where other project water-saving techniques compensate for the increased runoff). A level buffer zone of eighteen inches shall be provided between bermed turf areas and any hardscape (e.g., any street, walkway, or similar feature).
5. **Soil Conditioning and Mulching.**
- a. A minimum one-foot depth of uncompacted soil shall be available for water absorption and root growth in each planted area.
  - b. A soil test for horticultural suitability shall be required at time of landscape installation in each landscaped area. Soil shall be prepared and/or amended to be suitable for the landscape to be installed.
  - c. A minimum of two inches of mulch shall be added in each nonturf area to the soil surface after planting. Any plant type that is intolerant to mulch shall be excluded from this requirement. Nonporous material shall not be placed under the mulch.
- C. **Irrigation System Requirements.** All landscaped areas except those approved for maintenance with intentionally unirrigated native plants shall include an automatic irrigation system.
1. Water-efficient systems (e.g., drip, mini-spray, bubbler-type, or similar system) shall be used unless infeasible. Low-flow sprinkler heads with matched precipitation rates shall be used when spray or rotor-type heads are specified for watering shrubs and ground cover areas. Turf areas shall be sized and shaped so they can be efficiently irrigated. Spray or run-off onto paved areas shall be avoided.
  2. Dual or multi-program controllers with separated valves and circuits shall be used when the project contains more than one type of landscape treatment (e.g., lawn, ground cover, shrub, tree areas), or a variety of solar aspects. Soil moisture-sensing devices and rain sensors shall be used on larger projects (fifty thousand plus square feet of landscaped area) to minimize or eliminate over-watering.
  3. Watering shall be scheduled at times of minimal wind conflict and evaporation loss.
  4. Sprinkler heads must have matched precipitation rates within each valve zone.
  5. Check valves are required where elevation differential may cause low head drainage.
- D. **Certification of Landscape Completion.** The completion of required landscaping and irrigation improvements shall be certified by the author of the landscape and irrigation plan, through a signed

statement submitted to the director. (Ord. 205 § 1 (Exh. A), 2003)

**13.34.060 - Maintenance of landscape areas.**

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- A. **Maintenance Required.** All site landscaping shall be maintained in a healthful and thriving condition at all times. Irrigation systems and their components shall be maintained in a fully functional manner consistent with the originally approved design and the provisions of this chapter. Regular maintenance shall include checking, adjusting, and repairing irrigation equipment; resetting automatic controllers; aerating and dethatching turf areas; adding/replenishing mulch, fertilizer, and soil amendments; pruning; and weeding all landscaped areas.
- B. **Maintenance Agreement.** Prior to final building inspection or the issuance of a certificate of occupancy, and prior to the recordation of a final subdivision map where applicable, the applicant shall enter into a landscape maintenance agreement with the town to guarantee proper maintenance in compliance with subsection A. The form and content of the agreement shall be approved by the town attorney and the director.
- C. **Water Waste Prohibited.** Water waste in existing developments resulting from inefficient landscape irrigation leading to excessive runoff, low head drainage, overspray, and other similar conditions where water flows onto adjacent property, non-irrigated areas, walks, roadways, or structures is prohibited.
- D. **Enforcement.** Failure to maintain landscape areas in compliance with this section shall be deemed a nuisance, and shall be subject to abatement in compliance with the municipal code, and/or the applicable land use permit may be revoked. (Ord. 205 § 1 (Exh. A), 2003)